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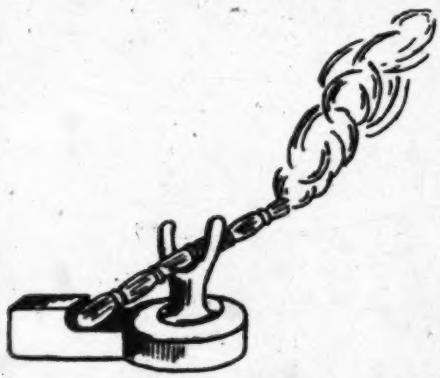
of the two front poles of the fireplace a little way above the floor serves as a holder for the bamboo stick kept for stirring the cooking rice or other foods.

A smaller box of ashes in the center of the room supplies a fireplace for the warming of the family when the air is chilly of nights and mornings. It is then comfortable to sit about the fire, as one visits and tells stories.

373 314

The Karen have little use for artificial light. They get up with the sun and go to bed with the chickens. Often the flaring light of the bamboo fuel in the fireplace serves for light, while they entertain visitors or do odd bits of belated work. When they need something more than this, they use a cup containing crude earth-oil (petroleum is found in large quantities in Upper Burma) with a wick sticking out, or they make torches from the resinous oil of the "xaw" *(Dipterocarpus)* tree. These enormous trees when tapped yield a good run of oil. After each run of sap they scorch the hole and get another run. The oil is mixed with bits of dry wood or punk and moulded into sticks about a cubit long and an inch in diameter by putting it into joints of small bamboo. When it has dried, it is wrapped in palm or pineapple leaves and tied up with bark fibre. When needed for use, one end is loosened and applied to the fireplace for lighting. It is then set on a rough stand fashioned out of wood, on which it rests in an oblique position and in this manner burns to the best advantage. Nowadays little tin lamps made by Burmese tinsmiths after the pattern of the old European lamps are in common use. These hold a cotton wick and give a little light and some smoke, as they have no chimneys.



A Torch with Its Stand

[177]

Usually beyond the cooking place a small partition extends out about four feet from the wall, forming a little alcove and hiding from view the family sleeping-room. The latter is a small apartment not more than eight or ten feet each way and is supplied with either a few rush mats, such as the Burmans are in the habit

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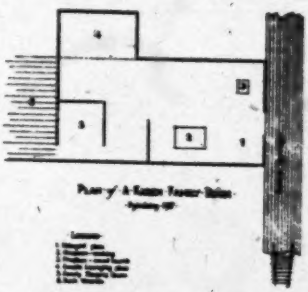
342 352 574 342 of sleeping on, or a single large bamboo mat, besides a quantity of old clothes, blankets, pillows, and rags scattered about or hanging from the rough ends of the walls. At either the front or back of the large outer room, whichever is toward the east—the place of honor in a Karen house—is a raised platform called the "hso hko." This is about a cubit's height from the floor and has a mat on it worn shiny with much sitting. It is the place where guests are received, especially if they are people of note. Here against the wall are a few pillows, which may be half-round bamboos of giant size, that is, from eight to ten inches in diameter, or cloth pillows filled with fibre from the cotton tree *(Bombax heterophylla)*. The guest is invited to sit on the platform and to partake of the contents of the fragrant betel-box, which is sure to be hospitably pushed in front of him. The cradle usually hangs from the crossbeams in the middle of the room, being held up by fibre ropes, although occasionally elephant chains are called into use to give full measure of security. The cradle itself may be a blanket swung up at the four corners, or it may be part of the trunk of a large hollow tree. A basket-work cradle is scarcely ever found in old Karen homes.

[314]



[854]

343 At the back of the family apartment the bamboo joists and flooring project several feet beyond the wall, forming a primitive back veranda where clothes are hung to dry; rice (paddy), fish, fruit, and vegetables are set out in the sun, and other domestic operations are carried on in private.

345 575 In a few Karen villages a young men's club-room ("blaw") is still maintained, but not in most. Where such a room exists, it does not differ in general appearance from a family-room, except that it has no partitions. The hearth in the middle of the space serves as a social fireside on cold mornings and evenings. At the east end a raised dais extends the width of the room, being used both for reception and for sleeping purposes. Guests, unless closely related to some family in the village, usually sleep here, except when, as a mark of respect, they are invited to sleep in a room apart on the "hso hko" with the men of the house. Women guests sleep in the family sleeping-room together with the women folk and children.

342 177 The old type of Karen village-house, such as we have been describing above, is being modified by contact with the Burmese

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273 quires the desired strength or percentage of alcohol. Distilled liquor is obtained by boiling the fermented beverage in a closed vessel, from the top of which issues a bamboo pipe that leads to another vessel in which the steam condenses. A more concentrated solution of alcohol is thus secured. On the plains the glutinous rice, which is raised there, is much more commonly used in making liquor than the ordinary grain, because it contains a higher per- [314] centage of sugar. The plains possess another source of intoxicant in the "toddy-palms." (See pp. 105 and 220.) The juice of these palms, which exudes from the cut stems of the fronds, is collected and allowed to ferment, thus producing a liquor that is responsible for much of the crime committed by the rural people of all races.

[462] In former days, in the more backward Karen districts and in Siam, the preparation of drink constituted a considerable part of the work of the women. It was used with every meal and was regarded as a necessary part of the native diet. Large quantities of liquor were provided for every festival. But its use is lessening among the more progressive natives and is rapidly disappearing among the Christian Karens.

276 The use of betel and tobacco is prevalent among the Karen people. Indeed, one might say that it is almost universal among them. The betel-box is always carried on a journey and is ever at hand [671] where work is being done. When the guest arrives, the first act of hospitality is to push the box, replenished with its masticatories, in front of him. Betel, in the estimation of the Karen, forms a part of his food. Small bits of the areca-nut are laid on a fresh green leaf of the piper betel vine; lime is also smeared on the leaf, and perhaps a few cloves or shreds of tobacco leaf are added; the betel leaf is then folded into a wad and put into the mouth. In the process of chewing this "quid" the saliva is turned to a bright red, being secreted in such quantity that frequent expectoration is necessary. Wherever this spittle falls it leaves a red stain. The interior walls of the houses, especially in the corners, and the floors near the cracks are much stained with red. It is not safe to stop under a window or beneath a house, unless one is sure that nobody is within. An early missionary, who traveled with a white pony, was surprised one morning to find his animal wonderfully streaked with red, which yielded only to a vigorous washing. Betel chewing stains the teeth black, though it does not materially injure them, except that the hard usage wears them down or causes them to [805] break off prematurely. Karens often speak of a short space of

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245 a vine-clad tree, which was called "pu la." Wanderers of other nationalities, happening to discover such trees, dispoiled them of their treasure by cutting the vines. Thus, but very few "pu la" remain.

Dr. Mason tells us that "Karen boys and maidens engaged in harvesting these leaves with great zest and it was not uncommon for young men, in seeking companions to inquire who were the most agile climbers of 'pu la' or betel leaf trees." [4]

231 The Karen in Toungoo have always raised more or less silk and woven the material for their best garments from it. The silk-worms are of a native variety and spin a thread far inferior to that of improved species. Not many years ago the attempt was made to introduce a worm of larger size, but it met with ill success, because the creature made a peculiar creaking sound in chewing the leaves of the mulberry tree. The superstitious people thought the new worms were possessed of some strange demon and killed them, in order to ward off an unknown danger.

314 Many of the inhabitants of Karenni gather stick-lac, which is
386 the deposit of an insect on certain trees found in the jungle. They also increase the supply by attaching the insects to other trees. The deposit is used extensively in making red dyes [5] and is marketed in Toungoo on the twigs to which it is attached.

231 The Karen is skilled in all jungle-craft. He knows the woods
137 and what may be found there. He has learned, among other things, that bees establish their hives high up in the branches of the oil-tree *(Dipterocarpus lociis)*. When he finds a new hive he marks the tree by putting a tuft of grass at its foot. Others will recognize the mark and respect his claim. To climb the fifty or seventy-five feet to the lower branches of these giant trees is no easy task. However, it is accomplished by means of pegs driven into the trunk and a rope encircling it. Often a honey-gatherer makes his ascent at night, lest he grow dizzy in looking down from such a height. Once at the hive, he smokes the bees out with a smudge and collects the honey into joints of large bamboo. The Karen villagers in the vicinity of Thandaung used to be called "Wild Bees" by the Burmans of Toungoo, on account of the supplies of honey which they brought in from their hills.

482 Besides the pursuits already mentioned, the Karen of the hills
492 sometimes engage in other occupations, such as transporting pro-

[4] *British Burma, Its People and Productions*, p. 498.
[5] See page 110.

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membranes at the joints are then drilled out with a sharp stick of hard wood, and small arrows are shaped and smoothed to fit accurately the bore of the blow-gun, the rear end of each arrow being tufted with a circle of feathers. A quick expulsion of the breath against one of these missiles inserted in the long tube drives it with sufficient force to kill small birds and game at a distance of a few yards. To use the implement effectively one must be able to stalk the game noiselessly and to bring the weapon to bear on it unawares. This gun may have been copied from Burman guns, for I do not find it in the hills.[1] The Karen hunters do not seem to be as skilful in its use as are the tribesmen of the Philippines, Borneo, and the Malay States.

The crossbow ("hkli") is one of the favorite implements for hunting among the Karen, but never seems to have found favor with them as a fighting weapon.[2]

The stock is made of some firm wood and has a small handle, like that of a cheek-gun.[3] Its entire length is not more than three feet. The bow is shaped out of cutch wood ("nya"), which is very tough and resilient. It varies in length, but is usually about four feet. The string is twisted fibre, generally that of the roselle plant *(Hibiscus sabdariffa)*. The bow is so strong that sometimes it takes two men to bend it, the string being held back by a rough trigger. The arrows consist of straight pieces of bamboo sharpened and slightly charred in the fire at one end to harden them, while they are tufted with feathers or fitted with a slip of dry palm or plantain leaf at the other end, which is bound around with string. Sometimes the arrow tips are barbed or supplied with flat iron points, and sometimes they are smeared with a thick gum taken from the Upas tree *(Antiaris ovalfloria)*, which is indigenous to Burma. This species of tree is similar to that from which the Malay and Borneo tribes obtain poison for their arrows. The milky juice exudes from incisions made in the bark of the tree and drys into a dark viscous gum, which is very bitter. This poison is supposed to be more virulent if gathered at certain times of the year. After being smeared with the poisonous substance, the arrow-tip is al-

[1] For a discussion of the blow-gun, see Skeat and Blagden, *Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula*, Vol. I, 254-257.

[2] The crossbow is found all over Yunnan among the Lisu and the Lolo. It is used in China, having been evidently adopted from the Lolo, as its name there indicates. It is not seen in Tibet, or is it used by the Burmese or by the Malay tribes, except as a toy by the children in Borneo: Hose and MacDougall, *The Pagan Races of Borneo*, Vol. I, 46. The crossbow does not seem to be found in the Philippine Islands.

[3] See p. 152.

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emerging will run into the string, lift the catch, and thereby receive the thrust of the spear in its body. (See page 100.) 224

Small animals, such as squirrels and rats, are killed by means of a heavy pole, one end of which is propped up from the ground just inside a tight fence enclosing or partly enclosing a field. Lengths of large bamboo lead the rodents through holes in the fence, and as they emerge on the inside they have to push by a string which releases the little prop under the log. Such traps are called "tu."

A small trap for catching rats consists of a joint of large bamboo fitted with a trigger like that on English steel traps, the trigger being connected with a bow of bamboo that fits over the open end of the section. The bow is opened, bait is placed inside, and the trigger is set. The rat enters, touches the food, the bow springs down over the open end, and he is imprisoned inside.

Birds are caught in a box trap similar to the one described on page 99, but of lighter construction and larger dimensions. In the specimen shown in the illustration (page 100) one hundred and twenty-seven pigeons were taken at one fall, I was told. It was set near the paddy threshing-mat, and a line of grain led the birds into it. The man who was watching the trap lay concealed in a pile of straw a few yards away and, when he saw the box well filled, pulled the string attached to the support upon which the end of the cover rested. The captured pigeons were killed by spear-thrusts through the cracks of their cage. 223

Pigeons are also taken by means of bamboo cages divided into two compartments. A young bird, caught before it can fly, is placed in one of the compartments as a decoy; and the cage, covered with green leaves, is hung near a tree in fruit to which the birds resort for food, or it is set near a field that is known to be a favorite feeding-ground of the pigeons. The calls of the decoy attract usually an aggressive male into the open compartment, the trigger snaps, and the door flies shut. Birdlime, made from the sap of certain varieties of the banyan, is smeared on twigs to catch small birds. [314]

Besides birdlime, cages, and box traps, various kinds of snares are utilized in capturing birds. A noose, made of tough fibre or hair, is hung over a path in the thick grass just high enough to catch the head of a pheasant or jungle-fowl as it walks along. Sometimes a series of standing snares or loops are used. A chain

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CLIMBING THE TODDY-PALM

The trees that are tapped have a bamboo ladder attached, so that the climber can more easily obtain the sap for making liquor.

A LARGE FISH-TRAP

This trap is used by Burmese and Karen in large streams. The bait is fastened to a string which, when pulled, drops the door. A smaller "beu" or Karen trap is seen at the right.

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